

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please delete paragraph [0029] and replace it with the following paragraph:

[0029] Figure 10 is a sequence comparison of the PIAS family of proteins (SEQ IS NOS 5-10, respectively, in order of appearance).

Please delete paragraph [0060] and replace it with the following paragraph:

[0060] Members of the caspase (CED-3/ICE) family of proteases are crucial mediators of the complex biochemical events associated with apoptosis. In particular, caspase-3 (CPP32/apopain), which has a substrate specificity for the amino acid sequence Asp-Glu-Val-Asp (DEVD) (SEQ ID NO: 4), cleaves a number of different proteins, including poly(ADP-ribose) polymerase (PARP), DNA-dependent protein kinase, protein kinase, and actin. Procaspase-3 is released from the mitochondria into the cytoplasm during apoptosis and activated to caspase-3 by an as-yet-unknown enzyme. Assays for caspase comprise addition of substrates for the enzyme that, for example, increase their fluorescence upon cleavage by caspase 3.